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# HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE:

Things You And  
Your Family  
Should  
Know



# **HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE:**

## **Things You And Your Family Should Know**

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### **Don't Let High Blood Pressure Fool You**

You can be a calm, relaxed person and still have high blood pressure. Hypertension is the medical term for high blood pressure; it does *not* refer to being nervous or upset or having an emotional condition. You cannot control your high blood pressure just by staying calm and relaxed. But it can be controlled by treatment. But if you don't control it, one day your high blood pressure could lead to a heart attack, stroke, or kidney failure. Follow your treatment plan daily even when you feel great.

### **High Blood Pressure — What It Is**

Blood pressure is the pressure needed to circulate the blood through the body. When too much of this force is pressing against the artery walls, it is called high blood pressure.

No one knows for sure why some people have high blood pressure. But one out of four adults in the United States has it.

### **How to Tell if You Have High Blood Pressure**

You can look and feel terrific and still have high blood pressure. Some people think that when they have a headache or feel dizzy or anxious, their blood pressure is up — and that's when they take their medicine. They are wrong, they should follow their doctor's advice. Just because a person feels well doesn't mean his or her blood pressure is normal.

### **How to Control High Blood Pressure**

Most high blood pressure cannot be cured, but it can be controlled. Daily treatment usually must be continued for life in order to get your blood pressure down and keep it down.

Your doctor or nurse will tell you what to do to control your high blood pressure. Follow their advice, and feel free to ask questions about your treatment.



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## **Pills Are Just Part of the Treatment**

If your doctor has prescribed medication, you must take it daily to lower your blood pressure. Your doctor may tell you to lose weight and cut down on salt. Or it may be necessary to stop smoking, reduce alcohol intake, or exercise more. For some people, these lifestyle changes help lower blood pressure. But don't try to choose your own treatment. Talk to your doctor about your plan. If you are on medicine, keep taking it while you follow the other recommendations. Don't let your prescription run out. Get it refilled.

## **When Your Doctor Prescribes Nondrug Treatment**

Follow his or her advice. Make efforts to lose weight (those extra few pounds may raise your blood pressure). Cut back on salt, and your pressure may fall or help the medication work more effectively. Exercise in moderation may help you control your blood pressure.



## Get Your Family to Help Out

Your family needs you. They want to keep you healthy and active. Be sure to tell them about your high blood pressure. Tell them what the doctor said to do.

Your family can:

- remind you when to take your pills;
- help you lose weight if you need to; and
- serve meals low in salt.

Then, help your family by having them get their blood pressure checked, the way you did.

Once you have high blood pressure, you will probably need to be under a doctor's care. If you treat it, it can be kept under control. You can be healthy, live a full life, and continue your normal activities even though you are following treatment.

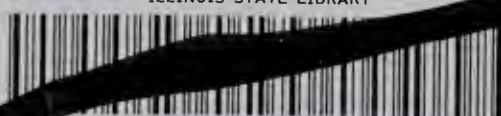
## Some Things to Remember

1. One out of four adults has high blood pressure.
2. A doctor, a nurse, or their assistant at a health clinic can tell you if you have high blood pressure.
3. Use less salt in the foods you eat, lose weight, stop smoking, and exercise more.
4. If prescribed, take your high blood pressure pills every day.
5. Tell your family and friends about your high blood pressure.

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